



MASTERS AND SCHOLARS

THE WHIDDEN LECTURES

1. (1956) C. W. de Kiewiet: *The Anatomy of South African Misery* (1956)
2. (1957) Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit: *The Evolution of India* (1958)
3. (1958) Ronald Syme: *Colonial Élites: Rome, Spain and the Americas* (1958)
4. (1959) Charles de Koninck: *The Hollow Universe* (1960)
5. (1960) Sir George Clark: *Three Aspects of Stuart England* (1966)
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8. (1963) Ian T. Ramsey: *Models and Mystery* (1964)
9. (1964) David Daiches: *The Paradox of Scottish Culture: The Eighteenth Century* (1964)
10. (1965) W. Arthur Lewis: *Politics in West Africa* (London, Allen & Unwin; New York and Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1965)
11. (1966) Sir Anthony Blunt: *Picasso's Guernica* (1969)
12. (1967) Northrop Frye: *The Modern Century* (1968)
13. (1968) Barbara Ward: *The Culture of Abundance* (forthcoming)

The Lectures are delivered each year in January: the second date is the year of publication, except where otherwise stated by the Oxford University Press.

THE WHIDDEN LECTURES FOR 1970

/c
Masters and Scholars

*Reflections on the Rights and Responsibilities
of Students*

ERIC ASHBY

Master of Clare College, Cambridge .



**LONDON
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS**

NEW YORK TORONTO

1970

Oxford University Press, Ely House, London W. 1

GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
THE CAMELOT PRESS LTD.,
LONDON AND SOUTHAMPTON

Foreword

The Whidden Lectures were established in 1954 by E. Carey Fox, a philanthropic alumnus of McMaster University, to honour a beloved Chancellor, The Reverend Dr. Howard P. Whidden, churchman, statesman, and teacher, who had been the architect of the University's transfer from Toronto to Hamilton in 1930.

Howard P. Whidden was born in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, in 1871, and was educated at Acadia University, a Baptist foundation in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, at McMaster University in Toronto, and at the University of Chicago. He served Baptist ministries in Ontario, Manitoba, and Ohio. From 1913 he was President of Brandon College, then affiliated with McMaster University, and he served in the House of Commons in Ottawa from 1917 to 1921 as the Union Government member for Brandon. Appointed Chancellor of McMaster University in 1923, he filled its chief administrative office until 1942. His portrait and the personal recollections of his students and friends display a man of striking appearance, unusual dignity, effective leadership, deep Christian conviction, and broad educational outlook. His retirement was the occasion for a sympathetic review of his accomplishments and

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courage in the cause of University Man and his affairs. He died in Toronto in 1952.

The Whidden Lecture Series has been wide-ranging, liberal, and often influential. The present lectures, fifteenth in the series, were given in January, 1970, and give promise of lasting significance. By profession a biologist, a plant physiologist and ecologist, Sir Eric Ashby has also been active in university affairs and administration for many years. At present Master of Clare College, Cambridge, and most recently Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, Sir Eric has occupied posts at Bristol University, the University of Sydney, and the University of Manchester. He was President and Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University, Belfast, from 1950 to 1959, and was Chairman of the Commission that produced a blueprint for higher education in Nigeria. A litany of his services to government commissions, museums and art galleries, grants committees and the like provide cumulative evidence of his skill and success as chancellor, master, and scholar. His recent service at Cambridge has brought him to grapple with problems of extraordinary complexity and significance in connection with university government and its modifications.

This university's invitation to Sir Eric is mark of the growing concern in Canada for the university as a community, as a community of learners, some younger, some older, bound together in common and related concerns, and with a more generous commitment to society as a whole than heretofore. Sir Eric's lectures,

FOREWORD

an artfully designed composition in sonata form, imparted the richness of a particular experience with grace, simplicity, and vitality, with subtlety in analysis and originality in thought. His appreciative audience and many others will now be able to assess and relish the virtues of his timely remarks.

Hamilton, Ontario
April, 1970

A. G. McKAY
Dean of Humanities
McMaster University

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Author's Note

It is a pleasure to record my gratitude to the faculty of McMaster University for the welcome given to a visitor from across the Atlantic and to the audience which braved the Canadian winter and forsook their firesides and their television to listen to me.

Lectures of this kind are not conjured up for the occasion; they are part of a continuum of thought. After some twenty years as an administrator in universities I have been reflecting on the network of human relationships which holds together the academic community. A few of the ideas in these lectures have been woven into other patterns: ideas about the academic profession, in a lecture which I gave to the British Academy; ideas about administrators, which were developed in the Compton Memorial Lecture at Washington University; and ideas about the student estate, which have been expanded into a book.¹

For most of the historical material in these lectures I am indebted to my co-author, Dr. Mary Anderson.

¹ E. Ashby, *The Academic Profession*, published for the British Academy by the Oxford University Press (1969); *The Scientist as University President*, Arthur Holly Compton Memorial Lecture, Washington University, St. Louis (1964); with Mary Anderson, *The Rise of the Student Estate in Britain*, Macmillan, London, and Harvard University Press (1970).

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Both she and I are grateful to the Leverhulme Trust, which is supporting a study we are making of the historical roots of some contemporary phenomena in universities. Finally I am grateful to Mrs. C. Durant-Lewis, who patiently and accurately typed her way through my untidy manuscript.

January 1970

E. A.
Clare College, Cambridge

I

'Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars'

No member of the audience, I was told, is likely to attend all three of these lectures. Therefore, I was told, each lecture should be able to stand by itself. Accordingly I have designed these lectures in sonata form. After a brief overture I shall run rapidly—*allegro*, I should say—through my theme. The second lecture will be a historical *andante*. The third will be a speculative, possibly even dissonant, *finale*.

By way of overture I have three things to say. The first is to thank McMaster University for inviting me to join the distinguished procession of Whidden Lecturers. The second is to declare my debt to one of these lecturers, Northrop Frye, whose book *The Modern Century* has greatly influenced my thinking and has set a standard which I cannot hope to reach. The third thing I want to say is that the backcloth for my lectures is British, just as the backcloth for Northrop Frye's lectures was Canadian. This last point is not important, because I am going to talk about universities, which are supra-national institutions. Your universities in Canada are descended from European universities. Your senates and faculties carry academic genes from Cambridge and Glasgow and Paris. Indeed the traits of academic

heredity—like those physical traits which make us exclaim: 'Isn't he the living image of his grandfather!'—are as visible in universities on the American continent as in Britain. It is only about ten years ago that the students at Harvard protested against the university's decision to print the bachelors' diplomas in English and no longer in Latin. A deputation waited on the president. A student dressed like a Roman senator uttered a speech of defiance, in Latin, from the steps of the Widener Library. Those were days when protests were entertaining. My point is this: to discuss in Canada the social anthropology of British universities is not to indulge in mere antiquarianism; it is to expose some of the heredity of the Canadian campus. You will certainly observe differences, some of which are adaptations to your environment; but you will observe also striking family resemblances.

Let us begin with the title of these lectures. When the common seal of the University of Cambridge is affixed to any contract or agreement, the document is signed on behalf of the Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars. The word scholar has changed its meaning since medieval times, but its present meaning certainly includes those whom we now call undergraduates or students. When a freshman at the University of Glasgow has signed the matriculation oath he becomes *civis universitatis*, a citizen of the university. And the charters of the most recent British universities contain the declaration: 'Members of the University are . . .' followed by a list which includes the academic staff,

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the graduates, various officials, and ‘undergraduate students’. The *de jure* status of students, therefore, is that of members of a corporation, not customers in a shop or patients in a hospital or passengers on a ship. The theme of these lectures is to examine the corporation with particular reference to the rights and responsibilities of students in it.

The three components of the traditional corporation are symbolized by the formula in use at Cambridge: Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars. But let me make it clear how I want to use these symbols. In medieval times chancellors were appointed by the church. They represented an authority outside the university. Nowadays chancellors in British universities are appointed by the graduates or by bodies on which the graduates are represented. Their function is purely ceremonial and ornamental. Their administrative duties are performed by vice-chancellors, who correspond to the presidents of American universities. The word Chancellor could be used, therefore, either as a symbol of external authorities which influence the university, or as a symbol of the administrative arm of the university. It is as a symbol of the administrative arm that I use the word Chancellor in these lectures.

The word Masters, too, has changed its meaning over the centuries. At one time—and in some contexts this is still true at Oxford and Cambridge—it included all who held an M.A. degree, whether resident or not. But in these lectures I shall use Masters as a symbol of the second component of the corporation: the academic

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staff, or the faculty, as it is called on the American continent. And the word Scholars, which in its modern meaning is confined to a small category of students of special merit, I shall use as a symbol of the third component of the corporation: the students.

Administration, faculty, students: these are the components of the modern university. In theory all three components work towards the same end; we talk about the university as a community dedicated to the preservation, advancement, and transmission of knowledge. There is some truth in this romantic scene but we cannot pretend that all is sweetness and light in the community of scholars. I would not go so far as to say that the academic profession 'has become one of the bitchiest professions in the world' (the words are those of an American writer in the *Teachers College Record*). But tension there has always been between the components of the academic corporation, and the tensions show no sign of diminishing. This, in my view, is natural and healthy and honest. One of the reassuring things about universities is that they have, as institutions, retained their identity over seven centuries, notwithstanding the very real conflicts of interest between the three components. The balance of power between them varies in place and in time. Thus the Scholars predominated in the universities of medieval Italy and still do in parts of Latin America. The Masters were in control in medieval Paris and still are in modern Cambridge. The administration, which did not exist as a separate component in the medieval academic

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world, is the most powerful influence in some American universities; and, lifted out of the university into the civil service, administrators have dominated the modern French university. We are at present at a climacteric of history in universities. A widespread redistribution of influence is taking place between the three components. Its most vivid manifestation is the rise of a student estate, about which I shall talk in my next two lectures; but there are other significant swings of the balance, such as the readjustments of influence between administration and faculty in Canadian universities which, I expect, have been influenced by the Duff-Berdahl Report.¹

Let us, for a few minutes, examine the component called administration, an activity personified in your universities and ours by the president or vice-chancellor. When I first became a university vice-chancellor, twenty years ago, a wise man gave me this advice: ‘Remember,’ he said, ‘that, in the eyes of professors, all administrators are evil. Look at yourself in the mirror as you shave every morning and say: “I am an evil; am I a necessary one?”’ This is a fair summary of the attitude of faculty towards administration in British universities. We have, I believe, the most under-administered universities in the world, and Cambridge tops the league for under-administration. The governance of Cambridge could be described as a constellation of little syndicates, controlled exclusively by academics, held together by a courteous and permissive

¹ Sir James Duff and Robert O. Berdahl, *University Government in Canada*, University of Toronto Press.

gravitational force called the General Board, which also is composed exclusively of academics. Within this constellation small changes can be made; large ones are impossible. Just as large mutations in genetics are harmful or lethal, so in universities large innovations create distress and massive resistance. When a major change is made in Cambridge, it is determined by an indecisive plebiscite of all the resident Masters, a body called the Regent House with some 2,000 persons on the electoral roll. I say the plebiscite is indecisive, because of these 2,000 it is rare for as many as four or five hundred to vote. Thus recently a very important decision was made in Cambridge. It was agreed in principle to set up a clinical medical school. This decision was not made by administrators, nor by a committee of experts, nor even by the elected Council of the Senate; it was made by a Regent House plebiscite in which 407 voted in favour, 69 against, and about 1,500 abstained from voting. Presiding over this singular universe is a vice-chancellor who serves, like the mayor of a city, for two years. He has no premises in the university: he works in his own home in one of the colleges. He has no staff attached to himself except a stenographer to type some of his correspondence. His profession is to be a scholar and the head of a college, and after his two-year term he retires with relief to his books or his laboratory.

In the civic universities the vice-chancellor holds a full time permanent appointment; but in only one British university, so far as I know, does the vice-

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chancellor have a full time professional deputy. In most universities his personal staff comprises one lady secretary, with possibly an additional stenographer to help her. The faculty regard with a jaundiced eye (as I know from personal experience) any attempt to proliferate this very modest entourage. There are, of course, other full time administrators—registrars, bursars, treasurers, building officers—but decision-making is jealously preserved for the academics. Administrators, even vice-chancellors (most of whom have been quite respectable professors at one time of their lives), are never permitted to forget that they are a barely necessary evil. They can, of course, have a great and good influence in the university, but only if they exert it by stealth. If a British vice-chancellor has an original idea it would be the height of ineptitude to publish it to his faculty and fatal to issue a directive about it. He must unobtrusively—if possible anonymously—inoculate it into some member of the faculty, informally over lunch, and watch it seep slowly upwards. With luck it will come on to his desk months later for comment, and he must greet it with the pleased surprise which parents exhibit when their children show them what Santa Claus has brought them for Christmas. This, I confess, is a curious technique of leadership, but it is the only technique likely to succeed in a British university. A vice-chancellor who is not prepared to discipline his initiative in this way will fail. Naked enterprise from the administration, which in industry creates confidence, in a British university creates suspicion, not to say alarm.

Initiative must lie with the faculty. The academic administrator has little to learn from captains of industry: he has a great deal to learn from diplomatists.

The situation has not always been like this. In the nineteenth century although Oxford, Cambridge, and the Scottish universities (with the exception of Edinburgh, whilst it was run by the town council) were under strong faculty control, the Masters in the new civic universities had to fight and win a battle against the administration, which in those days was not composed of vice-chancellors but of lay governors. The professors were not at first given seats on governing bodies. 'When a professor walks into the Council Room,' said a member of the governing body in the early days of University College, London, 'I shall walk out.' This attitude, which classified the professor as an employee, was invariably adopted by institutions founded in the nineteenth century which took the University of London as their model. In the infant University of Sydney, over a century ago, even the principal of the university was not on the governing body, and when the first three professors (one from Oxford, one from Cambridge, and one from Aberdeen) asked to be allowed to participate in the university's government, the reply they received was: 'the Senate will probably deem it conducive to the interests of the institution that you should be consulted, but they cannot compromise their freedom of action or their authority by giving a pledge that, without reference to you, no decision shall be finally pronounced.' In

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England it was no better. In the early days of University College, Nottingham, the principal, who was one of the professors, was excluded from the committee of management. In Owens College, Manchester, a two-tier system of government—a lay council and a professorial senate—was set up in 1870, but the by-laws of the college laid it down that: 'Professors may communicate with the Council only in exceptional cases and then only directly in writing addressed to the Chairman or through the Principal.' It was Sonnenschein, Professor of Classics in Birmingham, who led the Masters to their decisive victory. This was in 1898, when a charter was being drafted for the University of Birmingham. The draft deliberately excluded the faculty from participation in academic government. Sonnenschein discovered this just in time to 'riddle the draft charter with criticism' and to prepare an alternative draft, which based its claim for genuine faculty participation on the Universities (Scotland) Act of 1889 (not the only debt, as those of you who come to the next lecture will hear, which English Masters and Scholars owe to Scotland). The draft was substantially adopted. The faculties acquired responsibility for academic decisions and the right to elect their own deans. This was the model for other charters which, although they give *de jure* sovereignty to governing bodies on which laymen predominate, do in fact guarantee a permanently decisive role to the faculty and a permanently modest role to the administration.

Perhaps I should not have said a 'permanently

modest role'. For in British universities today there are forces from outside which are making administrators a more necessary evil than they could have claimed to be in the past. These forces come from the government. The English language is, as you know, a treasury of equivocations. We call our private schools public, and we contrast what we call our public sector of higher education (which really is public) with what we call our autonomous system of universities. But it is a fragile autonomy, because something like 85 per cent of the cost of running our autonomous universities comes from public funds. Alarmists in the British academic world fear government control and cry: 'Hands off the universities!' I do not share this alarm, for universities have always depended upon patrons to finance them, and over a stretch of seven centuries they have learnt how to dissuade their patrons—princes, bishops, tycoons, alumni—from meddling in their affairs. What is new about the present situation is that all the British universities have one common patron, the taxpayer; and there is a risk that the taxpayer's representatives and agents—select parliamentary committees, the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Department of Education and Science—may impose an undesirable uniformity upon British universities. To counteract this there has to be some sort of collective security, to protect this fragile (but, I assure you, still very genuine) autonomy. The only way to safeguard this is to strengthen the influence of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, which

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brings the heads of all the British universities together in London on the third Friday of each month. For the vice-chancellors will inevitably have to take collective action on behalf of their universities; and this in turn may strengthen the administration of universities (the Chancellor, to use my symbol) at the expense of the Masters.

Yet most of us in British universities, even those of us who have been vice-chancellors, are content with this relative weakness of the administration among the three components of the academic society, and hope it will remain weak. Its defects are obvious; but let me recite its virtues. The teaching staff spend dreary hours in faculty board meetings: but they are involved in and committed to the policies they create. These policies are untidy, sometimes wasteful; but they are generally determined on educational grounds and not on grounds of expediency or misconceived efficiency. The administration is controlled by amateurs; but the happy consequence of this is that tension between faculty and administration is practically unknown. To this extent, therefore, our British tradition, which almost eliminates the administration as a ‘power point’ in the university, is a good one. It promotes cohesion in the academic community and it simplifies the community structure. The only internal forces to be reckoned with are the Masters and the Scholars. Let us now consider the Masters.

The German university of the nineteenth century gave two precious legacies to the academic world:

Lehrfreiheit, which is the liberty of the professor to teach according to his convictions and his conscience, and *Lernfreiheit*, which is the liberty of the student to learn, according to his preferences, from the professors in whose classes he chooses to enrol. It was the combination of these two liberties which constituted academic freedom. But when these ideas crossed the English Channel and the Atlantic Ocean they were changed. On the one hand *Lehrfreiheit* has been enlarged into a concept of academic freedom which gives a professor immunities not enjoyed by other professionals and not directly relevant to his academic work. A civil servant cannot publicly preach anarchy. A doctor cannot advertise his virtues on television. University professors can do both—and some of them do—and would regard it as a monstrous infringement of academic freedom if anyone questioned their right to do so. *Lernfreiheit*, on the other hand, was diminished by its migration across the English Channel. For example, I would be surprised if it were possible in any British university for a student to read for a degree a combination of (say) physics and music; and I am certain that it is impossible for a British student to move from one university to another during his degree course, learning Tudor history from the scholar of his choice in Cambridge, philosophy from another scholar in Edinburgh, sociology from a third scholar in London. These are not restrictions which irk many students; they are only side-effects of an attitude to students in Britain over the last hundred years which is totally different

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from the status accorded to students in continental Europe. It is this attitude which determines the differences which matter. The statutes of my own college still declare that the tutor is *in loco parentis* and the student is *in statu pupillari*. In this strong climate of paternalism *Lernfreiheit* wilted when the concept of academic freedom crossed the English Channel. It could not stand up to the robust paternalism which had become the professional expertise of the tutor at Oxford and Cambridge. The aim of the Oxford don was, as Mark Pattison put it, to produce 'not a book but a man'. The curriculum was used deliberately to fashion a man in a certain tradition, to tailor him to a certain style of intellectual life, even to persuade him to adopt a certain pattern of conformity. All admirable aims for a stable society, and all in accord with a Platonic theory of education; but aims which could not be achieved unless the Scholars submitted themselves to a discipline which covered their conduct outside the classroom as well as inside it. In Cambridge, for instance, the Ordinances of the University in 1969 (they are about to be changed) still require students to behave 'modestly and becomingly', and edicts forbid them to gamble, have dealings with money-lenders, light bonfires, give parties exceeding fifteen people without permission, or attend dances which have not been sanctioned by the Junior Proctor. It would be disingenuous to pretend that these edicts were faithfully observed. That is not my point, though it is a point which I shall raise in my third lecture. My

present point is that the paternalistic tradition in British universities, even though it has been interpreted with indulgence (which modern youth calls by a different name: hypocrisy), presupposes a dominance of the Masters over the Scholars. So in the climate of British universities, with the administration tamed (the lay governing bodies, which I do not discuss in these lectures, were tamed long ago), and the students expected to regard their teachers with filial piety, *de facto* sovereignty resided in the faculty.

For generations this sovereignty has been exercised with moderation and tact. The evidence for this is clear. British universities have been almost immune from wrangles between faculty and administration. Despite their near monopoly of control, British professors did not, as their German colleagues did, become autocrats or mandarins. Their relations with students have been informal and friendly and their paternalism has been indulgent. Until recently the Scholars accepted their modest role as junior members of the corporation of Masters and Scholars. The Scholars may have had few rights, but they had fewer responsibilities, and even those who studied in the grimy atmosphere of Manchester or Leeds were—and knew they were—privileged members of their age group. Both administration and students had faith in the faculty and the faculty justified this faith by their loyalty to Mark Pattison's prescription: 'Not a book but a man.' Teaching and research were (to use the cliché of commencement addresses) inseparable; but the obliga-

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tion to one's students took precedence over the obligation to one's subject. This, as we know on both sides of the Atlantic, has become much more difficult as higher education has expanded. Promotion, recognition, honour in the academic world depend on the books you write, not on the men you teach. Even at Oxford and Cambridge, where commitment to teaching is, I believe, stronger than elsewhere in Britain, there has been a change. The distinguished historian Herbert Butterfield confesses that at meetings of the history faculty the members now speak 'as University Lecturers, each of us a little more concerned to look after the fortunes of his own branch of the study', whereas he recollects a time when they spoke rather as supervisors of students, interested in the whole intellectual development of the young men in their charge. Thus the Masters are beset by divided loyalties. On the one hand there is loyalty to students, faculty, senate; on the other hand loyalty to the discipline of the profession: chemist or historian or economist. The loyalties overlap but they do not coincide. Ask yourselves: which matters most to a young economist: the verdict of the other components of the university society, namely the students and the administration? Or the verdict of economists in other universities? You will be obliged to answer: economists in other universities. When the academic profession was small and static, the answer to this question did not matter much. It does matter today.

Since 1945 the academic profession in Britain has

had to adapt itself to two unprecedented changes. It has had to expand so that it now includes hundreds of persons who, if they had graduated forty years ago, would not have regarded an academic career as their avocation (nor would they have been considered suitable for it); and it has, for many young academics, made research competitive instead of contemplative. Let me emphasize in passing that this competitiveness has not created a 'flight from teaching' of the alarming dimensions which are—very justifiably—causing such anxiety in the U.S.A. It is still possible in Britain, thanks to the rich ratio of faculty to students which we have so far managed to preserve, for an academic man to combine first-class research and first-class teaching. A crude numerical measure of this is that some three-quarters of the Fellows of the Royal Society are university teachers. But we are all of us—academics on both sides of the Atlantic—influenced by the dogma which Humboldt called *Erziehung durch Wissenschaft*. 'The relationship between teacher and student,' he wrote five generations ago, 'is changing. The former does not exist for the sake of the latter. They are both at the university for the sake of science and scholarship.' It is not surprising that a young man on the lower steps of the academic ladder is severely tempted to allocate less time to the art of teaching and to leisurely talking with undergraduates, and more time to what is ironically described as 'my own work'. At his best he reconciles these two claims on his time. At his less than best he comes to regard teaching cynically. One of our

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young poets, Thomas Blackburn, has put it only too clearly. He is writing about ‘Teaching Wordsworth’:

I’m paid to speak, and money glosses
Irrelevance; to keep their places
Students are paid, and so the burden
Is lightened of our mutual boredom,
And if the gain’s not much, the damage
Is also slight within this college.

Here and there this ‘mutual boredom’ had dried up the academic society and this has made it inflammable. There is in Britain—and perhaps it is true in Canada also—a certain ambivalence about the attitude of the Masters towards the Scholars. Some faculty members strongly hold to the traditional view that (in the words of one faculty group) ‘tutorial care and the education of the whole man are held to be essential features’. Others equally strongly deny this; a university, in their view, is not an institution for moral training and should not become one. A generation ago Walter Moberly lamented that a university will teach students how to make bombs or cathedrals, but it will not teach them which of these objects they ought to make. ‘Nor *should* it teach them which they ought to make’, is the view of those who believe that universities must remain detached, objective, ethically neutral, if they are to preserve their autonomy.

This is a genuine dilemma. It is true that some of the great contributions which universities have made to society have been possible because the Masters in

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universities can reflect without having to decide, observe without having to participate, criticize without having to reform. The price of autonomy is to abjure power. But is it the inevitable consequence of this that the Masters have to abdicate responsibility for the social consequences of science and scholarship? This, I think, is a dilemma facing the Masters. Northrop Frye, in a paper on the morality of scholarship, has put the problem vividly. Concern, he wrote, is a normal dimension of everybody, and for scholars it prevents detachment from degenerating into indifference. It has nothing to do with the content of knowledge, but 'it establishes the human context into which the knowledge fits'. 'What we have to determine,' he wrote, 'is to what extent concern is a scholarly virtue, and whether or not it is, like detachment, a precondition of knowledge.'

I shall return to this dilemma in my third lecture. It is one of the schizoid forces which is pulling at the society of Masters on both sides of the Atlantic. The other schizoid force is one I have already mentioned: the loyalty split between the university the faculty member serves and the discipline he professes.

There is a third schizoid force, which the President of the University of Toronto referred to in a recent address. The academic, he said, 'tends to dominate both the cloister and the market place'. He meant that successful academics get drawn out of universities by their very success, to serve on government committees or to act as consultants, or to pick the fruits of the higher

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journalism. The Masters, in some fields, find they have a highly marketable skill which can be put generously at the disposal of governments or (less generously) at the disposal of private industry or television networks. These temptations are greater than some of them can resist; Jacques Barzun called them 'scholars in orbit': they redefine academic freedom as the freedom to choose what they shall do and when, and to withhold any service they please.

These are some of the strains and tensions affecting identity and cohesion in the estate of Masters in our universities. What do the Scholars observe about these strains and tensions? And how do the Scholars react to what they observe?

These are questions which, until recently, the Masters did not bother to ask, because corporate opinion among the Scholars was not articulate. In Germany, if a professor does not give students the teaching they want, the students vote with their feet and their money: they migrate to another university and leave the professor without a class. In Britain they cannot do this. The student is a captive audience. There is therefore a genuine need for the faculty to be able to assess consumer opinion among students and to respond to it. Procedures for assessment and response are developing rapidly in our universities, but—and we are bound to confess this—only because corporate student opinion has now become effectively articulate. The technique of non-violent protest, learnt in civil rights demonstrations in the southern states of America, has proved to be

a more effective agent of persuasion than the riot, arson, and even murder which were features (let us remind ourselves) not only of the medieval English universities but of some American colleges only four generations ago. What the strike has done for the trade unions, the peaceful sit-in is doing for the student movement. I say this not to approve it or to condemn it: it is just a fact.

The anatomy of protest is not new. What is new is its capacity for cohesion and continuity. But the familiar symptoms of escalation were present even in the sporadic incidents of a century or more ago. Let me end this lecture with a comforting—perhaps cautionary—anecdote.

In 1828 the Chair of Anatomy at what became University College, London, was held by Professor Pattison. He was an urbane and courteous man with an endearing dash of eccentricity; for his hobby was fox-hunting, and he was apt to lecture in scarlet coat and top boots. All this was to his credit. But he was not a good anatomist. During the session 1828-9 the council of the college received anonymous complaints about his incompetence. These the council investigated and dismissed. In April 1830 they received a complaint signed by a student named Eisdell. They refused to consider a charge made by a single student. Thereupon, a month later, the council received a memorial about Professor Pattison, signed by seventeen students, which ran as follows:

We charge him with *unusual ignorance* of old notions and *total ignorance* of and *disgusting indifference* to new anatomical

'CHANCELLOR, MASTERS, AND SCHOLARS'

views and researches . . . he is ignorant, or, if not ignorant, indolent, careless, and slovenly, and above all, indifferent to the interests of the science.

This was sufficiently unambiguous to prod the college council into action. They appointed a committee to look into the matter. The committee examined four students, including Eisdell, and then the council made their first mistake. They decided that in future the duties of the Chair of Anatomy should be divided between Pattison and his demonstrator, Bennett, and that Pattison should be appointed to the Chair of Surgery, presumably on the assumption that dissatisfied patients would not be in a position to submit their grievances to the council.

One of the features of modern student protest is the co-operation of graduate students and dissident members of the faculty. This, too, is nothing new. Before dispersing for the summer vacation the students entrusted their cause to a certain Dr. Thomson, whose status is unclear, but he resided in the dispensary. Not content with the action the council had already taken, Thomson submitted a further memorial in August 1830, urging the dismissal of Pattison. The summer vacation, which spreads like an anticyclone even over present-day student storms, might have brought the matter to an end; but at this stage the storm was whipped up by an only too familiar agitator: the press. *The Lancet*, evidently relishing a slice of medical scandal, published a letter from Thomson, declaring that he had fulfilled his 'trust' to the aggrieved

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students. The college council then made their second mistake: they dismissed Thomson from the dispensary.

This gave the affair a flying start into the next academic year. Early in October Thomson, defying his dismissal, entered the college to address an assembly of students about Pattison's shortcomings. But by now—and again how familiar the story is—the grounds of protest had changed. Not Pattison's dismissal, but Thomson's reinstatement, was the demand. Tricolour emblems with the slogan 'Thomson and truth!' fluttered round the college. The council met and confirmed Thomson's expulsion.

Meanwhile Pattison continued to give lectures under what must have been discouraging conditions; and it was not long before he made a mistake. He (to quote the expression used by a student who wrote to *The Lancet*) began 'to evince irritation'. He refused to give a certificate of attendance to a student who had organized a further memorial, and he demanded that the students, who had hitherto sat where they liked in the lecture theatre (which, as all professors know, is at the back), should sit in the front. Here was a fresh cause for protest. Must the students submit to being ordered about by a man whom they had paid to instruct them? It was 'a gross and unwarrantable outrage on their liberty'. A 'committee of twenty-four' was set up to handle the confrontation. At this stage the college council summoned three ringleaders, did not allow them to call witnesses, found two of them guilty and

suspended them from anatomy and surgery classes for the rest of the session.

The grounds of protest changed again. No longer Pattison or Thomson but victimization of fellow students was now the cry. One hundred and nineteen students signed an indignant manifesto, and Pattison's next lecture collapsed in chaos. By now the painful polarization, which always accompanies such episodes, had split the college. Some students deplored the ill-mannered treatment of a professor; others deplored the council's high-handed repression (as it would now be called). For months the dispute went on, and the college council took the opportunity to make one more mistake: on 23 July 1831 they dismissed Pattison from his chairs. He retreated to the United States, where he continued to hold chairs of anatomy for twenty years. He died, still in office as Professor of Anatomy in the University of New York, in 1851. This dismissal roused a new hornets' nest: the faculty was now indignant. Was a professor's tenure to depend on the pleasure of the students? The issue had now become an attack on academic freedom. Six members of the faculty had already sent a stinging protest to the college council. The distinguished mathematician Augustus de Morgan resigned his chair. Two other members of the faculty followed suit. In a scarifying letter to the committee of council de Morgan wrote: 'The University will never be other than divided against itself as long as the principle of expediency is recognised in the dismissal of Professors. . . . No man will feel secure in his seat; and,

consequently, no man will feel it his interest to give up his time to the affairs of his class.' And in a letter written to William Frend in July 1831 he wrote: 'I could never send a ward of mine to an institution where it has been thus admitted by precedent that the student is a proper person to dictate the continuance and decide the merits of a Professor. . . .'

I told you that this would be a comforting, and perhaps cautionary, anecdote. It comforts me, because it puts into perspective some (of course not all) of the present turbulence in British universities. The uprising in London, was not like a medieval town-and-gown riot, nor was it like the destructive horseplay which used to punctuate college life in Oxford and Cambridge and which, provided the damage was paid for, was regarded with amused indulgence by the dons. The affair was a genuine grievance against incompetent teaching. And there lies the moral of the story. In these trivial, isolated events, over a century ago, we can observe the symptoms of the protest syndrome. We can attribute their isolation and comparative triviality to the fact that there was, in those days, no recognized, organized student movement in Britain. In my next lecture I shall describe how one arose.

The Student Movement

I invite you to spend this lecture with me in the placid waters of history (I called it in my first lecture a historical *andante*), and I begin by reading to you extracts from a handbill posted by students on the gates of a university.

If you wish to regain your infringed rights . . . if you wish to make the Professors redeem that pledge . . . which they have . . . refused to fulfil . . . if you would banish dogmatism and supercilious pedantry from [the University] then . . .

But I must not go on, or it will give away the origin of the handbill. It is obviously not of very recent origin, for it does not include expressions like 'repressive tyranny of the military industrial complex' or 'prostituted by the consumer society'. But some indignation and defiance are there just the same. In fact the handbill is 145 years old. It was published by the students of Marischal College, Aberdeen, when they were campaigning for the re-election of Joseph Hume as rector.

The circumstances were as follows. The rector of a Scottish university is nowadays elected by the students alone. He, and an assessor appointed by him, represent the students on the university's governing body, called

the court. But he is much more than a students' Ombudsman. He is the titular head of the university. Originally he was appointed by the whole body corporate, the Masters and Scholars. But in four of the five Scottish universities this privilege of taking part in the election had been filched from the students. In Edinburgh the rectorship had become a perquisite of the Lord Provost of the city. In St. Andrews the university allowed students to vote but permitted only four candidates to stand: the four were the professors of divinity and ecclesiastical history and the principals of the two colleges; an arid choice, from the students' point of view. In Aberdeen there were two universities; in one of them (King's College) the students took no part in the election of rector. In the other (Marischal College) the students still voted but it had long been made quite clear to them that they were to elect a man whose name was proposed to them by the professors.

In 1824 the students of Marischal College, Aberdeen, asserted their rights under the charter. In defiance of the professors they elected a radical Member of Parliament, Joseph Hume, as their rector. To the alarm of the college, the rector intimated that he would take his duties seriously. And he did: on the instigation of the students he held a rectorial court for the first time since 1738, and after a public enquiry, reproved the professors for unpunctuality, a reproof which, by all accounts, they fully deserved.

This was one of several occasions in the early nineteenth century when students protested about their

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rights in rectorial elections. In 1858 an act was passed which entrusted to the students the sole responsibility for electing a rector. He was still titular head of the university, but since he was not put there by the Masters *and* the Scholars, he and his assessor were regarded as the representatives of the Scholars on the court. In those days the court was a small body (only six to eight members); so the representatives of the students, although they were not students themselves, constituted one-third to one-quarter of the university's governing body.

But the rectorship was not much used by the students as a channel of participation between themselves and the university. Each year, at election time, it created knots of solidarity among students supporting rival candidates. There was a rectorial address (sometimes very stormy: in 1861 Maitland, the solicitor general, delivered his rectorial address in Aberdeen with blood trickling down his face from a missile which had struck him during the uproar), but once the rectorial address was over the rector usually disappeared, the students dispersed, and any corporate opinion which had been generated among them ran into the ground for another year.

Then, in 1883, a trivial incident occurred which I regard as the source of the student movement in Britain. A young man from Edinburgh University who had been studying in Germany saw a placard on a door of one of the buildings in Strassburg (as it was then spelt) labelled '*Studenten Ausschuss*', Student Committee.

He got a copy of the constitution and studied it under the shadow of Strassburg cathedral. The young man—his name was Fitzroy Bell—decided that this was the sort of organization students ought to have in Edinburgh. In January 1884 Bell called a meeting of student representatives from the various faculties and societies in the university, and a Students' Representative Council was set up. The representatives were elected by constituencies of students according to faculties, or classes. The objects of the council were to represent the interests of students, to be the official recognized channel between students and the university authorities, and to promote social life and academic unity among students. The council earned golden opinions from the start by persuading the student body to behave with dignity and decorum (a remarkable achievement for Scottish students in those days) at the tercentenary of the university which was held shortly afterwards. On the strength of the goodwill it earned in this operation the council began—and has kept up ever since—a 'firm but friendly pressure' on the university authorities. It secured improvements in the library; it organized a staff-student consultative committee to reform the clinical instruction in the faculty of medicine; it criticized the high failure rate for the M.A. degree; it proposed something similar to the free university which present-day activists regard as very up-to-date and 'with it', namely an arrangement whereby anyone, not just the appointed faculty, should be free to advertise and give courses in the

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university, and that students should be able to choose which courses to attend so that, in philosophy for instance, they would not need to be exposed to what the S.R.C.'s student newspaper called 'the sterilising influence of a systematic dosing of one school of thought'.

Of course the Students' Representative Council in Edinburgh did not persuade the authorities to take all its advice. But there is no doubt whatever that since 1884 there has been an effective student movement in Edinburgh University with corporate student opinion which has been taken seriously by the authorities and which has influenced the university.

Very soon after 1884 S.R.C.s were created in the other Scottish universities and in 1888 the student movement in Scotland took another historic step. Let me spend a few minutes on it because it illustrates a theme which I want to bring out in these lectures. The theme is that the most effective way for students to acquire rights is for them to shoulder responsibilities. In January 1887 it was announced in the Queen's speech at the opening of parliament that legislation would be introduced for the reform of the Scottish universities (bills had been before parliament on and off for four years, with never enough time allowed to get them through). Immediately the S.R.C. in Edinburgh set up a sub-committee to influence the contents of the bill, and by November a memorial was presented to the Scottish members of the government. The memorial sets out the reforms which students wanted—an interesting list and, although it is eighty-three years

old, how very familiar: an improvement in the faculty-student ratio; less emphasis on lectures as a means of instruction; greater freedom of choice among courses for degrees; account to be taken of teaching ability in the appointment of professors. Meanwhile the bill was dropped again and revived in the following year. Student activity was not confined to Edinburgh. The S.R.C. in St. Andrews proposed joint consultations among students at all four universities; these gave birth to a second memorial which was carefully timed to reach Westminster just before the committee stage of the bill. The memorial requested amendments to the bill which would strengthen the constitutional position of student councils. Among the amendments were: (i) increased representation on the courts, which were the governing bodies (for the bill proposed to halve the voting strength of the students' representatives by increasing the size of courts without increasing the number of rector's assessors); (ii) student representation on senate committees; and (iii) an assurance of the right of access of S.R.C.s to the courts and the senates and also to the commissioners who, if the bill was passed, would have the task of revising the ordinances for all the Scottish universities.

The bill was passed and it contained much, though not all, that the students had asked for. The essential provisions, however, were there. Students' Representative Councils were recognized by parliament as integral parts of the constitution of Scottish universities—the student movement was now established in the statute

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book of Westminster. The act laid down, too, that the commissioners might include students among those to be consulted about the new university ordinances.

The commissioners were duly appointed and for nearly ten years they laboured at the revision of ordinances. The two memorials I spoke about just now had evidently made such a favourable impression on the commissioners that they were in a receptive mood to receive further suggestions from students. This meant that over a stretch of years students interested in university reform were able to take an active part in it. Indeed the authorities encouraged them to do so. The S.R.C.s of the four universities accepted this challenge. The Edinburgh students' council prepared another statesmanlike document, this time for the commissioners. They asked for some assured income for S.R.C.s (they suggested a shilling per head raised by an increase in the matriculation fee); they asked that the S.R.C. should have an opportunity to comment on draft ordinances before they were adopted; they asked to be consulted as to who should be appointed to the important office of rector's assessor, for the assessor was the man who really represented their interests on the court; they wanted (a surprising request) a fairly stiff entrance examination to be passed before a student was admitted to a degree course.

This document for the commission and the two memorials to the government convey a sense of responsibility and good judgement and concern for higher education. The carefully worked out and tactfully

worded requests had their reward. The commissioners did submit draft ordinances to the S.R.C.s of all Scottish universities for comment. They gave the S.R.C.s a privilege not provided in the act, namely direct right of access to senates—the act provided only for access to courts. And most of the requests about academic matters which were made by the students appeared as ordinances. In brief, the students of the Scottish universities in the stretch of years between 1887 and 1900 had an indubitable influence on higher education in Scotland. They won the confidence of the university authorities: ‘You as students,’ said the Principal of St. Andrews University in one of his annual addresses, ‘may help in moulding these alterations [the new ordinances] so as to make them beneficial.’ And, by exercising their influence responsibly, they acquired for the student movement as a whole valuable and lasting rights. One further outcome of these combined operations conducted by the students’ councils led them to form a consortium which still flourishes, now renamed as the Scottish Union of Students. It was the first national forum for corporate opinion among students in Britain.

This strong current of cohesion did not affect Oxford or Cambridge, because there the student’s loyalty was to his college, not to the university, and colleges were small intimate societies which did not at that time feel the need for any formal machinery of student government. The first English university to form a students’ council was Liverpool. This was in 1892. Its direct

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inspiration was from Scotland. Its birth, like that of the Edinburgh S.R.C., coincided with a state occasion, the opening of the Victoria building. But this time there were no golden opinions earned. The authorities had, very unwisely, decided to exclude students from the opening ceremony. The students organized a biting petition of protest. The authorities responded by opening the gallery to students; but their magnanimity was rewarded with what must have been regarded as the basest ingratitude, for the students who were admitted to the hall disrupted the proceedings by making unseemly noises; and, as the chancellor rose to speak, an enormous biscuit, three feet in diameter, was lowered from the ceiling until it cut off the astonished chancellor from his audience. Upon the biscuit was an inscription explaining that it was a gift to the university senate, 'which took the biscuit for its impertinence in trying to exclude the students'.

I tell you of this incident not simply to entertain you, but as an example of another way in which cohesion is achieved among students. You can imagine the indignation among the worthy citizens of Liverpool, and the affront to the majesty of the academic senate, which this sort of episode caused in 1892. This in turn united the students in self-defence, and it put upon the new student council a heavy responsibility to atone for the disgrace and to guarantee it would not be repeated.

Between the turn of the century and the outbreak of World War I, students' councils were formed in other civic universities, and the charter which established

the University of Birmingham in 1900 took a further step in recognition of the student estate by providing that there 'shall be a Guild of Graduates of the University and a Guild of its Students' each having representatives on the Court of Governors. This secured for the English universities a recognition of the student movement, similar to that accorded eleven years earlier to the Scottish universities. But not quite the same; for the court in Birmingham (and in similar civic universities in England) is not a small executive governing body; it is a mammoth assembly likely to meet only once a year. Nevertheless students were able to be represented on this body by 'real' students not, as had been the tradition in Scotland, by distinguished adults elected by students. Only in one institution, the Queen's University of Belfast, was provision made for a student, the president of the S.R.C. (provided he was a graduate), to sit on the executive governing body.

Inspired by the Scottish example, the English students' councils sought some way to pool their corporate opinion by having annual congresses. These were pleasant social occasions, and they discussed several important topics but did nothing much about them. Perhaps the only useful practical outcome was an interest in self-governed residence halls (the prototypes of a modern commune)—and even this took its lead from Scotland. Regarded as attempts to concentrate and consolidate opinion among students the congresses failed. The reason was that in those days there were no

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issues likely to unite the interests, or to inflame the passions, of students at a national level. Students did not think of themselves as a class having rights or responsibilities.

When the storm-clouds of war lifted in 1918 and young men came back to reconstruct Europe, there seemed to be a great opportunity and a great responsibility for students to contribute to peace. The universities were filled by men who had survived a tragedy past comprehension. They were promised, and they believed it then, that it had been a war to end wars. One way to seal this promise was for the students of Europe to co-operate. To this end students from France resumed their annual meetings by organizing a student congress in Strassburg (now spelt Strasbourg) in 1919 which set up a *Confédération internationale des étudiants*. The idea was that this C.I.E. (as it came to be called) would have affiliated to it the national students' unions of European countries. But England had no national students' union; and that was how one came to be founded, in 1922, composed of representatives of the students' councils or guilds of separate universities.

It would weary you to hear details about the rising and falling fortunes of the N.U.S. in the twenty years between the wars. Ex-servicemen at the universities left and were replaced by schoolboys, for whom war was only a story told by their elder brothers and their parents. The C.I.E. did many useful things: it facilitated travel, it organized international games, it promoted friendship between individual students. But it did not

help much to heal the wounds of Europe; on the contrary, it solidified into a Gallic bloc which refused to allow the Germans and Austrians back into a partnership for peace; and later on it changed and became an agent for Mussolini's fascism. On the home front the N.U.S. made useful enquiries over graduate unemployment (a great anxiety in the early 1930s), student health, and so on. But the word 'apathy' which haunts all student organizations became more and more frequent in the records of the union's meetings. Criticism grew louder, enthusiasm wilted, and the membership began to fall away. It was the students' guild at Liverpool, the oldest representative council in England, which halted this decay. The guild sent a circular to all the constituent members of the N.U.S. asking, in effect, what use did they want to make of a national student movement. This stimulated the union's leaders to get their priorities straight; and the union applied itself to a critical appraisal of universities themselves. There was much to criticize: the squalid conditions in which many students had to live and work; inadequate facilities in some of the smaller universities at a time when government grants were being cut; a suspicion that curricula needed adaptation to a new kind of world and that teaching methods could be improved. There was, too, a dry wind of disillusionment which troubled the minds of sensitive students. The future was not secure. Wars had not ended. There was an economic depression. There were students whose parents were on the dole. Appeals to take the thorny

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path of pacificism were made by those who now realized that it was not just the wickedness of the Kaiser which had shattered the peace of Europe. Then came Italy's invasion of Abyssinia and the farce of sanctions (a farce recently repeated with different stage props in Rhodesia); the war in Spain; the crying necessity for independence in India; the Jewish exodus: a rising tidal wave of anxieties which had a cumulative effect on the conscience of student leaders in Britain. One can sense among some of them a stirring of collective responsibility, a belief that somehow the corporate voice of students should be heard both inside universities, to improve them, and outside universities, to work for the improvement of society.

Responsibility meant engagement: criticism inside the universities and political commitment outside. The N.U.S. banned political topics from its debates; yet it is difficult to take a stand about the ills of society without some sort of political commitment. These circumstances began to give purpose and a fresh thrust of energy to the student movement, and a note of militancy was audible at the annual meetings of delegates. This was encouraged by some of the elder statesmen of the student movement. In 1939 Ramsay Muir, who as a student had founded the first students' council in England (at Liverpool), addressed the N.U.S. at its annual meeting. He was then a veteran of sixty-seven. He deplored the fact that universities made no proper provision for teaching about such topics as nationalism, the working of representative democracy,

the relationship with the Third World; and he is then reported to have said: 'Why should not the student bodies demand and insist that guidance on such themes, and opportunities for discussion, should be opened to them?' Students ought to be insisting that their need for this sort of curriculum should be satisfied. Why, he asked, don't students do this? 'I think,' he said, 'one main reason is that they have not been hitherto organised as corporate bodies, with leaders of their own.'

Ramsay Muir's subversive remarks evidently took his audience by surprise, but it was just the sort of encouragement which leaders of the student movement needed. The pronouncements of the union had become sharper. 'No person with the required ability should be precluded from attendance at a University' was one policy statement issued in 1938: it is one which the union has stuck to ever since. To a Canadian audience this doubtless sounds like a jumbo-size platitude; but you must recollect that in 1938 the chance of an English boy or girl going to a university was about three in a hundred, compared with the present chance of a Canadian, which I am told is at least eighteen in a hundred. And in 1940, when the annual meeting of delegates was held under the presidency of an earnest and convinced Marxist, the congress issued a Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities (which will be the theme of my next lecture), and it was told by its president that students 'working together for similar and constructive ends, can be a force and influence of real

strength in a sick world'. The congress demanded the immediate independence of India and condemned the system of imperialism. It also affirmed its belief 'that the principles of Socialism, Federation, and Democracy, are all essential for the establishment of a new world order'. That was thirty years ago. There were a lot of resolutions about university reform, some of them admirable, and there was some shrewd criticism of the British academic scene. It is easy to say, and I think it is correct to say, that the enthusiastic solidarity of this conference did not reflect opinion among the rank and file of students in Britain. The rank and file were not interested in these wider issues and had no opinion about them; but it was the opinion of the articulate elected representatives of these students, and surely in all systems of representative democracy there is, except on specific issues in times of crisis, a similar contrast between the engagement of the representatives and the apathy of their constituents. At the congress in the following year (1941) the impetus of interest was maintained, for the attendance nearly doubled (there were 1,100 delegates) and the discussions and resolutions, though free from the Marxist jargon so evident in 1940, were still vividly concerned with really important problems: the relevance of curricula to social needs, the need to preserve civil liberties, and a re-assertion of the need to bring higher education within reach of all who could benefit from it; framed (as a newspaper editorial put it) 'in no spirit of self interest but in the light of the wider interests of the community'.

Here is evidence of the stirring of corporate student conscience. Student congresses continued during the war years, with attendances at over one thousand. When victory was in sight, the British people, tired but heroically hopeful, turned a second time to build a new world, and the student movement produced a blueprint for its small sector of the new world. It was the result of considered discussion among the constituent unions in different universities. Its proposals are now so familiar that I do not need to recite them. In any case the significance of the document for my present theme is not in its content; it is in its style. It was subdued, reasoned, persuasive; not a catalogue of demands from a trade union but an *aide mémoire* of suggestions for reform. This was the spirit in which the student movement in Britain emerged from the war and it is the style in which spokesmen for the movement have done business with the university authorities since; at any rate until very recently.

That was twenty-six years ago. The achievements since 1944 of the National Union of Students and their constituent unions and councils and guilds have, in my view, been a complete vindication of this policy. It is a style jeered at by the New Left as 'sherry diplomacy' and 'compromise with the system'. Well, it should be judged by its results.

For a time after 1945 it seemed as though history would be repeating itself. The British student movement survived the war better than any other student movement in Europe and its leadership from 1946 was

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influenced by a new generation of ex-servicemen. The leaders believed that Britain had a responsibility to restore the international amity of students. There was not only Europe to think about now but the Third World: students from Africa, India, Malaya. In 1947 the National Union of Students affiliated itself to the International Union of Students. But again political rifts soon appeared. The I.U.S. was considered to be run from behind the Iron Curtain; to belong to it was therefore to flirt with communism. British students tried to hold their own independent point of view at its meetings but eventually they had to withdraw. It is a melancholy thought that international student movements, launched with such high hopes and manned by young people with such vivid enthusiasm, have always been shipwrecked in political storms. Having extricated itself from the I.U.S., the British joined a new organization, the International Student Conference; until it was disclosed that this body was being financed by the notorious United States Central Intelligence Agency. Again they withdrew.

But these misfortunes abroad did not weaken the influence of the student movement inside Britain. There have of course been struggles for power between those who sought influence by patient negotiation with the Establishment, and those who sought not influence but confrontation. You have, I understand, had a similar experience in the Canadian student movement. There are, you see, two ways to win a game of chess. One is to outplay your opponent. The other is to bash him over

the head with the chessboard. In both cases the opponent is beaten, but there is an important difference in the quality of the victory. Students' councils in the separate universities, and, at national level, the N.U.S. and its independent Scottish elder brother, the Scottish Union of Students, have—with a handful of exceptions—played the game by the rules of negotiation and have won several very important rounds.

First, the student movement had to get its facts straight. So the London office of N.U.S. set up a research unit which has produced some impressive reports. In a similar way some individual students' councils have presented their universities, and the University Grants Committee which finances British universities, with incontrovertible data about working and living conditions in universities. Then the student movement had to cut a channel of communication between itself and the authorities. In most of the universities communication is already good; and the University Grants Committee reserves an hour at each university it visits to have an off-the-record talk with a delegation of students. At national level communication was not at first so easy. The Minister of Education declined to listen to the student voice. But this changed dramatically when David Eccles became Minister. He welcomed the N.U.S. and encouraged it to lay its views before his ministry. And in 1960 the chairman of the University Grants Committee addressed a conference of delegates from the universities arranged by the union, encouraging them to express their views about the development

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of higher education in the quinquennium 1962-7.

Thereafter the channels of communication between the N.U.S. and the Establishment became busy with traffic. The union had by now extended its membership to include colleges outside the university system. (It may be necessary to explain to a Canadian audience that in Britain only 53 per cent of the students having full-time higher education are in universities; the rest are at colleges of education or colleges of technology, art, or commerce. These students were not eligible to belong to the N.U.S. until 1937 and their numbers have greatly increased in the last ten years.) Conditions for students in some of these non-university institutions were deplorable. Girls in some colleges of education were bound by rules which would have been appropriate to a medieval nunnery. In some colleges of further education the students had no control even over their own union. The spokesmen for students therefore had plenty of lobbying to do. They learnt the techniques of lobbying as (to go back to my analogy) a keen chess student would learn from master players in chess. Exchanges of correspondence with ministers, circulars to Members of Parliament, press conferences, and TV appearances, became each year more sophisticated. The most effective technique was the evidence given to the national committees which were reviewing higher education at that time, especially to the famous Robbins Committee. There is an astonishing resemblance between some of the forty recommendations made by the N.U.S. to this committee and the

policies proposed in the committee's report. I do not, of course, imply that one caused the other; most of the ideas were in the air anyway at that time. But the corporate student view did undoubtedly influence those policies, (as I know, from my own experience on the University Grants Committee, the corporate student view influenced that committee's policies). Perhaps the crowning symbolic moment was in the spring of 1965 when the executive of the National Union of Students was invited to dine with the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street. The public knew, then, that the government recognized a student estate in Britain. It had become a body whose corporate opinion had to be reckoned with; its membership had in 1965 reached nearly 300,000.

How did the spokesmen for the student estate use this influence? I have time to give you only two examples. In 1965 the colleges of advanced technology (C.A.T.s, as they were called) which were in the public sector of education, were being transformed into autonomous universities. In Britain that means that they had to receive royal charters and new constitutions approved by the Privy Council. The governing bodies of some of the C.A.T.s prepared draft charters without consulting their students, a mistake they might not have made if they had read the history of Scottish universities. This was discovered at Battersea Polytechnic, which was to be the new University of Surrey. The student union there got hold of a draft surreptitiously. The draft had not, in their view, made proper

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provision for an adequate disciplinary procedure; it had not made adequate proposals for participation; and it had not given students control of their union. Here was a clear case for intervention on behalf of the student estate. The N.U.S. issued a printed pamphlet of amendments to the draft charter which it sent to the Privy Council; it then publicized the case by a press conference, and sent a letter to the Prime Minister. By return it received a letter from the Secretary of State for Education and Science, written on the authority of the Privy Council, to say that the Privy Council was advising all sponsors of new university charters to make three provisions: (i) for an association representing the student body, (ii) for joint committees composed of student representatives and representatives of senate and council, and (iii) for a right of appeal over decisions on discipline. This was tantamount to saying that the Privy Council would not be likely to approve any new charter which did not comply with these three suggestions. Not all the amendments were agreed to; the N.U.S. did not get all it asked for, but it had scored something of a diplomatic success. But now the campaign had to be carried into the older universities which were not revising their charters and statutes. The student leaders, despite their success by the use of 'sherry diplomacy', were under pressure from the militants to use the techniques of confrontation, demand, non-violent direct action, in order to exact more concessions more quickly. Notwithstanding warnings from the president of the N.U.S., the delegates to

the council passed a resolution supporting 'non-violent direct action' when university and college authorities fail to respond to student demands. In 1968 there were mild outbreaks of unrest in a dozen British universities. The vice-chancellors, sensitized by shock waves from Berkeley, Berlin, and Paris, prepared themselves to deal firmly with trouble. Here was a second opportunity for the representatives of the student estate to act as mediators and to avoid a head-on collision. To their great credit they seized this opportunity. During the summer of 1968 a joint statement was worked out and on 7 October it was issued in the names of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and the National Union of Students. It set out, as clearly as any such diplomatic statement could be expected to do, the rights of students to take part in decision-making in universities and the limitations of these rights. It set out the essential principles for discipline in a world where the idea that a faculty member could or should act *in loco parentis* had become an abandoned myth. It hinted at the reforms which the student movement would press universities to adopt over examinations and curricula. Not, by and large, a dramatic document in content but—as for the post-war blueprint produced twenty-four years earlier—it was an historic document in style. For it stood for a partnership between senior and junior members of the university, achieved not by the 'abject subjection of Quisling students to the Establishment' (this is how one militant critic described it) but by blunt talk and hard bargaining between two groups in a community

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with common aims: the Masters and the Scholars.

These two examples of student diplomacy are further illustrations of the theme which I proposed to you when I described the negotiations between the Scottish student representative councils and the government three-quarters of a century ago: student councils which act responsibly will acquire rights. By 'act responsibly' I do not mean 'act with deference' and I certainly do not mean 'act in a spirit of subjection'. There was a time, I know, when professors did not expect students to think for themselves. There was a famous master of Trinity College, Cambridge, in the nineteenth century who declared that the student should 'entertain a docile and confiding disposition towards his instructor'. Our aim as university teachers now is just the opposite: to provoke a disciplined critical attitude towards knowledge, and we must not be surprised if this attitude is adopted towards our universities and even towards ourselves. This, I believe, is one of the rights of students, provided it is accompanied by a corresponding responsibility.

I believe that this balance of rights and responsibilities does exist in Britain today, but it would be misleading to leave you with the impression that the student movement now occupies a secure place in the policy of British higher education. It is, rather, balanced in a delicate equilibrium. I have described, in this historical *andante*, how it has grown from the resolve of a Scottish student, sitting in the shadow of Strassburg cathedral eighty-seven years ago, into well-organized movements represented locally in each university or college by a

students' council or guild, and nationally by the Scottish Union of Students and the much larger, and now much more vigorous, union representing students in the rest of Britain. It is a movement with over 400,000 members. For the most part they are inarticulate and reasonably contented, but they have shrewd and forceful and articulate representatives as their spokesmen. It is a movement which has campaigned for good conditions of work for its members and which has defended their rights of free speech and protected them against possible miscarriage of justice. But, far more important than these trade union activities, the representatives of the student movement have thought about the content and style of education they wish students to receive and have put forward useful and constructive views which have influenced policy. Among the more sincere and thoughtful students who shape corporate opinion, responsibilities to their institutions and to society loom larger than rights. But not all student leaders are sincere and thoughtful. Cohesion in the student movement is still fragile. It seems to me that the movement faces two major decisions. Will it choose to become a trade union, bargaining across the table with the administration and faculty as bosses, not sitting down with them as partners? Or will it rest its influence upon the belief that the Masters and Scholars are members of a corporation consenting to the same ends? That is the first major decision to be made. And the second: will the movement succumb to the infection which has afflicted three international student movements—the

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infection of alignment in politics? Last April the N.U.S. altered Clause Three of its constitution which—for nearly fifty years—has protected the union from resolutions on political issues. By allowing its representatives to become a pressure group in politics, and not simply in education, the movement could lose its influence and its liberties—just as, in the past, universities which have corporately dabbled in politics have lost their influence and liberties. Or the representatives of the student movement could alienate public confidence by magnifying their own rights, and applying sanctions to secure them, at the expense of their responsibilities. In my next lecture I shall reflect on some of these rights and responsibilities.



Rights and Responsibilities of Students

On 31 January 1967 one misreported sentence kindled the dry tinder of student protest at the London School of Economics. The retiring director of the School had cancelled permission for a meeting to be held in a lecture theatre, on the grounds that the purpose of the meeting was to generate opposition and hostility towards his successor. A group of students shouted that they had a right to use the theatre. The director was thought to have replied 'Students have no rights'. He did not in fact say this, but truth becomes the first casualty in moments of provocation. The angry students broke into the theatre, and the London School of Economics entered a phase of turbulence which is not over yet. This incident was not, of course, the real origin of the turbulence: it was used as a convenient symbol. But that does not diminish its significance; symbols make history.

All citizens possess rights and responsibilities. In Britain, though we have no formal constitution apart from our accumulated statutes, there is a massive consensus about what these rights and responsibilities are. The right to free speech and free assembly, the responsi-

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bility to preserve law and order: these may be neglected, but they are not challenged, by the vast majority of British people. Complications arise when the citizen voluntarily joins some institution in the state, for this may diminish his rights and enlarge his responsibilities. Civil servants, for example, cannot publish criticisms of the government, priests cannot utter heresy: but both civil servants and priests have more onerous obligations to the public than ordinary citizens have.

When a student enrolls in a British university, do his rights and responsibilities change? The university's answer is yes: he experiences a little diminution in both. He is relieved of some of the responsibilities of fellow citizens in his age group (he is not earning his living, for one thing), and he may be expected to forgo some rights, for instance the right—if you regard it that way—to entertain persons of the opposite sex in his place of residence on the campus at any time of the day or night, or to play the trombone in a residence hall when others are asleep, or to gamble on college property; and he certainly forgoes the right not to be interested in study. Before the rise of a student estate, when students were simply a temporary assembly of individuals without a corporate voice, this change in rights and responsibilities was not clearly defined. Universities, like hotels or restaurants, simply required people who would not conform to their customs to go away. Today there is a strong sense of cohesion, with all the corporate spirit of a movement, among students in Britain. One of the natural products of this sense of cohesion is a claim to

rights and responsibilities. And one of the pressing problems of the present day is the attitude of the rest of society towards the rights and responsibilities which the spokesmen of the students claim for themselves.

Let me remind you of the context in which I speak. In Britain the proportion of the age group attending universities was (in 1967-8) only 6.3 per cent, compared with about 18 per cent in Canada. And this proportion has been reached only recently. There are, of course, other avenues of higher education, but British universities still cater only for what Americans and Canadians would regard as an elite. Only about 58 per cent of those technically qualified to enter universities find places there. But it is an elite privileged in a new way. It is selected on merit alone (the overall drop-out rate in British universities is 13 per cent, and fewer than 11 per cent drop out for academic reasons) and its beneficiaries are generously endowed from public funds (about 90 per cent of students in British universities receive financial aid and their fees—most of which are paid from public funds, too—cover no more than about 7 per cent of the cost of their education). It is reasonable, therefore, to expect the British public to take an interest in the rights and responsibilities of students.

Let us now observe what rights and responsibilities British students themselves think they have. The first Charter of Students' Rights and Responsibilities was published in 1940, after a British Student Congress held at Leeds. Here it is in full:

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600 STUDENTS gathered at the British Student Congress at Leeds,

DEEPLY CONSCIOUS of the inequality, the poverty, and the destruction of human life and values which characterise our society,

BELIEVING that the Universities, Colleges and Training Colleges of Great Britain have an indispensable part to play in the advance towards a new, peaceful and just society,

AWARE that they are not at present fully playing that part,

REALISING that British students have the responsibility of ensuring that the knowledge and culture of the universities are used in the interests of the people as a whole, of ensuring that University education is not the privilege of a class, and of working with all sections of the people to this end,

CONFIDENT that the students of Britain will contribute their share to the efforts of progressive humanity, inside and outside the Universities, to secure peace and justice for all peoples,

FIRMLY CONVINCED that freedom, liberty and democracy within the Universities and Colleges are essential if they are to implement their responsibilities towards the community,

And having heard evidence of recent encroachments upon student liberties:

WARN the students of Britain of the danger of further attacks,

AND CALL UPON THEM to work in unity and with all their strength for this Charter of Student Rights:

The Charter

THE RIGHT to the free expression of opinion by speech and Press.

THE RIGHT to organise meetings, discussion and study on all subjects within the University and College precincts.

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THE RIGHT to belong to any organisation, whether cultural, political or religious.

THE RIGHT to participate to the full in all activities outside the universities, and to collaborate with extra-university organisations.

THE RIGHT to a share in the government and administration of the universities.

Given these rights,

WE PLEDGE ourselves to fulfil our responsibilities to the community,

AND CALL on all students to defend them by their united action, and all sections of the British people, for their support.

On present standards it is a mild and courteous document, innocent of familiar expressions such as 'non-negotiable demands', 'intolerable repression', 'manipulation by the military industrial complex', and 'complicity in capitalist consumer society'. But in 1940, taken together with resolutions at the same congress demanding independence for India and objecting to the continuation of the war against Hitler, it had the effect of a small bomb, splitting the cement of the National Union of Students. It came in a year when there was a temporary takeover of the N.U.S. by its more radical members. The rights (in my view) are unexceptionable—they are not the rights which any university ought to ask its members to surrender—but I do confess that I find the solitary responsibility ('to fulfil our responsibilities to the community'), though it might indeed cover a great deal, somewhat lacking in precision compared with the rights.

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Twenty-seven years later, in 1967, there was another attempt to define the rights and responsibilities of students, though this did not get beyond the stage of a draft. It is a twelve-page document, with none of the cutting edge of the 1940 charter, but with some very illuminating detail. The rights remain similar, though they now include no discrimination according to race, colour, creed, or sex; an insistence that students must be in sole control of students' unions; and a demand (though this word was not used) that students should be consulted over academic issues and should be represented at the national level on 'bodies concerned with the organisation and administration of the educational system'.

The more interesting part of this document of 1967 compared with its forerunner is its concern with responsibilities. A student's behaviour, says the document, 'should never be based on the belief that he is entitled by his status to any additional licence'. 'One of the major responsibilities of students' is to act 'as a conscience of society'. Students as a class 'bear collective responsibilities towards the community'. They should discharge these responsibilities locally, for example by sharing their facilities (such as unions) with the public, and in all other ways obliterating the differences between themselves and the rest of their generation; nationally, by involving themselves individually in national politics; internationally, by participating in the international community of students and by condemning oppression in all its forms.

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In the same year, 1967, a joint statement on rights and freedoms of students was issued from a drafting committee composed of faculty and student representatives in the United States. It says very little about the responsibilities of either faculty or students, and is mainly concerned with safeguards to ensure that justice is done on the campus. It does contain two sentences relevant to my theme: the first, that all members of the academic community are responsible for securing and respecting 'general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn'; and the other, that students should have clearly defined means to participate in institutional government. There is an important assumption behind these sentences; they assume that the student is a member of an academic community, and that his interests are best served by identification with the community, not by ranging himself against the faculty in some sort of trade union.

I shall spend the rest of this lecture discussing some of the implications of these documents. Consider first the list of rights published in 1940. All of them, except the right to organize meetings on university premises and to share in university government, are simply the right of every British citizen. In the years leading up to the war some of them had been curtailed. The University of Reading, for example, had banned a poster against the officers' training corps. In Oxford a body calling itself the October Club had been suppressed. In the London School of Economics there was in 1934 a great commotion, remarkably similar to some of the recent tribu-

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lations in that School. The director banned the sale, on the premises, of the magazine *Student Vanguard*, which contained an offensive reference to a member of the faculty, and he prescribed various obnoxious restrictions on the Marxist Society, which wanted to conduct a sort of free university of Marxist lectures in the School. The president of the students' union, an American named Meyer, defied the director and went on selling the magazine. He was expelled, despite an outcry from the students and the appointment of a National Reinstatement Committee to press for his readmission. But, notwithstanding these incidents, no one seriously believed even in 1940 that these rights were in jeopardy, and they certainly are not in jeopardy in Britain today. (In my own university the Revolutionary Socialist Students' Federation meets every Monday at 8 p.m. on university premises to plot the disruption of the university and the overthrow of society.) The only specific and peculiar right claimed in either of these manifestos is the right to share in the government and administration of the universities.

It is interesting that this right, now so much in the news, was claimed unambiguously by the National Union of Students in a document now thirty years old. We cannot tell how it was received at that time (although one writer, very sympathetic to the student cause, described it as showing 'an entire misconception of the nature of a university') because soon after its publication the Battle of Britain started, and questions of students' rights were submerged by war. The claim

to this right was renewed—as you heard in the last lecture—during the 1950s and it met in some universities with modest crumbs of response. Today the claim has become a demand, enlarged by some students into the slogan ‘student power’ and supported by the new techniques of protest. This has raised in universities two really important questions. To deal with them properly would require a whole course of lectures. All I can do in this lecture is to draw your attention to them and to offer my own personal opinions about them.

The two important questions are, first, the legitimacy of the demand for student power; and, second, the ends to which it would be put if it were acquired.

Permit me now to issue a warning. Student unrest has so caught the imagination or interest or disgust of the public that the mass media have poured weeks of television time and gallons of printers’ ink into the topic, often creating news rather than just reporting it, sometimes, by their very relish for sensation, stirring the mixture to keep up the confusion. Weekly magazines have analysed the topic to shreds. And serious disorders in prestige universities, from New York and Berkeley to Paris and London, provide material for money-spinning paperbacks. It is therefore difficult to say anything which is at the same time accurate and yet clear. Let me warn you, therefore, that to pick sentences out of the rest of this lecture will certainly distort what I mean to say; and that to achieve any clarity at all I shall have to simplify.

First, the legitimacy of the demand for student power.

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If this means, as the French National Union of Students (U.N.E.F.) declares that it means, a student right of veto on all decision-making in the university (a view which reappears in the report of the 32nd Congress of the Canadian Union of Students, held at Guelph in 1968), then there is, in my view, only one answer, namely non-negotiable rejection. For a right of veto would destroy the university as we know it, not because students are vicious (the overwhelming majority of them are not), but because they are, on problems of academic management, comparatively ignorant; as ignorant as I am, for instance, about the management of the steel industry; and unfortunately it is not necessary to understand an issue in order to veto it. So the first point I would make is one already admirably made in a pamphlet published by the presidents of the universities of Ontario: that a university is not a mini-state composed of citizens of equal competence to decide academic policy. It is more like a guild of masters and apprentices, but let me go on in the same breath to say that the apprentices do have special rights in the guild and should participate in its management. The question is how and in which areas of management.

There is virtual unanimity in Britain that students should control their own unions, clubs, societies, and publications; and that they should be responsibly involved in decision-making for their own welfare, in health services, catering, and arrangements for residence. In most British universities students are involved, too, in disciplinary procedures. For academic business I

think it is now true to say that all British universities have joint faculty-student committees at the level of departments or faculty boards or senates and there is student representation on many governing bodies; but the power and scope of these joint committees are matters of controversy.

The case in favour of apprenticeship participation depends, in my view, on the answer to one question: is it educationally advantageous? Here are five reasons why I think it is. First, the apprentice (let us now go back to calling him the student) has the competence of a consumer. He would say that it is not necessary to be a brewer to judge the quality of the beer. And since, in our British university system, the student cannot migrate to another university to get different teaching, a clear and open channel of feedback from student to faculty is essential and is likely to improve the quality of education. Second, the very autonomy of universities isolates the academic staff from criticism. A professor's research is criticized by his peers in the world of scholarship; but within the narrower world of the university itself, professors in the past were exposed to no criticism apart from the in-fighting among themselves to get their share of scarce resources. When a university is run largely *by* faculty, as our British universities are, there is a temptation to run it largely *for* faculty. The presence of students on academic committees is an insurance against this, and this insurance is likely to improve the quality of education. Third, the primary aim of the university guild is self-renewal

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through teaching: the purpose is to turn the apprentice into a master, and in some disciplines—experimental biology for instance—techniques are changing so fast that the graduate student doing research may soon outstrip his master. So the assumption which a university teacher very properly makes—that he is better informed on his subject than his students are—is one which he is in duty bound to extinguish. The process of extinction is gradual, not sudden; so it is not unreasonable that progression to full membership of the guild should be gradual too. Fourth, participation is an important education in itself, an initiation into the democratic process; so the machinery of academic government is an educational resource which a university cannot allow to run to waste. Fifth, and most important, a university depends on consent as to its aims from all its members. It is folly to pretend that any constraint except self-constraint will, in the long run, preserve the society of Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars. To draw students into some of the decision-making processes gives them information without which consent is meaningless.

Compared with these arguments in favour of student participation the arguments against it seem to me to be weak. Student participation spins out the length of meetings and takes up the time of teachers. But, to put it bluntly, that is one of the duties teachers are paid to do; for it is education. Teachers should of course be prepared to be very tough about this part of their job. I have no use for the sentimental liberal who thinks the young should be treated gently because they are so

innocent and ignorant. It is not (as my colleague Bernard Williams put it) 'an essential part of an academic's good faith, that he is prepared to be bored into the ground'. Another objection to participation is that there must be reserved areas (e.g. faculty appointments, and examinations, to name only two) from which students are excluded. Very well: it is part of the technique of academic government and of the educational process to establish these reserved areas. Presumably the students regard the editorship of their newspaper as a reserved area from which the faculty should be excluded, and in Britain students vehemently insist that they should have exclusive control of their unions. In other words, all union business is 'reserved'. It should therefore be practicable to drive a bargain about reserved areas on senates and faculty boards. A third objection, though it is one dying on the branch of paternalism, is that students should be dissuaded from dissipating their time on matters which they do not understand, when they could use the time more profitably on football, music, or even working for a degree. It is strange, isn't it, how we strive to teach students a critical approach to history, economics, physics; but demur when they apply this critical approach to the one first-hand experience they are having: higher education.

So, to sum up, I agree with the 1940 charter of the National Union of Students. It is a right of students to participate in the government and administration of universities. And it is equally a right of the faculty to

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ensure that this participation does not blur the fundamental distinction between the Masters and the Scholars; participation must rest on one axiom of consent, which is that the university exists so that those who know more can transmit knowledge and the techniques of scholarship to those who know less; therefore the Scholars come to learn and the Masters are there to teach. Any pattern of participation which weakens this authority of the university must be resisted.

In the context of this discussion the first lesson to be taught and learnt is the art of participation. Students are deeply suspicious about this art; so to teach it to them is difficult. In this lecture I have time only to touch on two points. One is the kind of democracy appropriate to university management; the other is the myth of power in university management. Many students favour 'open' democracy. This is the unstructured meeting which is attended by people most of whom have not had access to all the relevant information and who have not reflected on the issues. The meeting is addressed often by speakers whose aim is to persuade, not to inform; and by a show of hands the meeting may then take a decision or mandate its elected leaders to adopt a certain line. The leaders then attend the student-faculty committee with their opinions determined for them, impervious to discussion round the table, bringing to the committee not a fresh mind but a fixed vote. The prerequisites for the successful practice of open democracy are an equality of competence and experience among the participants, a large

area of implicit agreement about aims, and a limited complexity in the issues to be determined. None of these prerequisites is present in the administration of a university.

The alternative is indirect democracy. This may use the ~~pro~~ procedures of open democracy to elect representatives, though it is far more satisfactorily done by secret ballot. An open meeting may also lay down general lines of policy to be advocated (such, for instance, as the use of continuous assessment in examinations instead of written essay papers at the end of the course). This expression of opinion is a valuable guide provided it leaves the representatives free to use their discretion and to make their decisions after what is often a very intensive and arduous study of the problems. The aim of government by indirect democracy is (in the words of one of my colleagues, Charles Parkin, who has given a lot of thought to this matter): 'to elicit, implement and maintain coherent rational decisions on common welfare . . . out of that multi-levelled aggregate of discontents, desires, demands and purposes, some widely shared . . . some narrowly sectional. . . . The necessary spirit and conventions of this form of democratic machinery are a degree of trust in the relative disinterestedness and good intentions and relatively superior information . . . of those to whom executive and administrative autonomy is given.' The dangers in this pattern of democracy in student politics are obvious. The student representative has to have at any rate a temporary independence of his constituents, and he

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cannot carry back to them the confidential and tentative state of mind of a committee whose policies have not yet crystallized out. He ought, like the senior members of the committee, to regard himself as a servant of the whole university, not of the one section of it which elected him. Accordingly he easily gets out of touch with those whom he represents; he may then be labelled as a tool of the Establishment, and if this happens he is discredited and participation breaks down.

Nevertheless, the dangers in open democracy are equally obvious and a great deal more ominous. I do not need to remind you of the ways in which tough, well organized minorities can manipulate open student meetings, filibuster until the moderates have got bored and gone home, and then produce by a show of hands a bogus sense of solidarity in the name of the whole student body. The technique is familiar, but let me give you one example. Recently in one British university there was a meeting of the students' union to decide whether to hold a sit-in. A motion to sit-in was defeated (if the count is to be relied upon) by a show of hands, 450 votes to 117. As the meeting broke up a voice was heard: 'All who voted to sit-in stay behind'. About a hundred students remained. According to union rules they were technically a quorum. They passed a unanimous resolution to sit-in, and declared to the press that they spoke in the name of some 3,000 of their fellow students. A constitution which permits this sort of thing is intolerable, if only because the first disciplinary duty in a university is to guarantee that students who want

to think or read or play games are not perpetually being obliged to attend meetings to ensure that their opportunities to do these things are not disrupted. So in my view there is nothing for it but to insist on indirect democracy for university business, with elected representatives—both senior and junior—who are not mandated except in the most general terms, and who speak and vote in their deliberative capacity. This is the first lesson in participation.

The second lesson concerns power. The President of the National Union of Students, 1969-70, Mr. Jack Straw, recently gave a lecture on student participation. He criticized the arrangements made to involve students in the government of British universities on two grounds: the first, that student participation has not brought about any transfer of power to students from what he calls 'the few who reign in our universities', and the second . . . well, I had better quote what Mr. Straw said:

It is true, of course, that many student unions have gone beyond membership of mere consultative committees, and in an increasing number of cases are now directly represented on the governing body, academic board, university senate or university council and their committees. But with a very few exceptions student members are few in number—rarely more than two on a board of thirty or more—and soon discover that the body on which they sit, whilst constitutionally having power as the supreme decision-maker, does not make decisions.

This statement is perfectly correct, but Mr. Straw's

interpretation of it is incorrect. He and scores of other student reformers believe that these arrangements for student participation are cynical devices to pacify agitators, concessions which offer no effective participation, 'tokenism' deliberately made in such a way as to leave the 'power structure' untouched.

I have every sympathy with the disillusion of students who sit on governing bodies and feel that they are not taking part in decision-making. Their sentiments are valid. But this is not because there are 'rarely more than two' of them; nor is it because there is some sinister and secret decision-making junta behind the façades of senates and councils. It is because the power to make most of the decisions basic to the purpose of universities is so dispersed that no one—whether student or vice-chancellor—can get his hands on it.

Consider for a moment what these decisions are. Universities exist to transmit and to advance knowledge. The two essential decisions are: what is to be taught? And what research is to be done? The belief that these decisions should be taken by individual members of faculty and not even by faculty committees or heads of departments lies at the very root of academic freedom. Any vice-chancellor or dean who issued a directive to the professor of chemistry about the content of a chemistry course would need to be referred to a psychiatrist; and any committee which interfered in these two prerogatives of the professor except in some extreme crisis would be committing an act of folly. So (but I remind you that I have to simplify the argument) it is broadly

true to say that power to make the two essential decisions in universities is dispersed evenly among all tenured members of the faculty. To propose transferring such decisions as these to committees, whether there are students on them or not, would be a gross infringement of ~~academic~~ freedom.

From these two decisions there flow three important ancillary decisions: who is to be taught? Who is to teach? And how is the acquisition of knowledge to be assessed and certified? In British universities power to make these decisions, too, is very widely dispersed.

There is no centralized, co-ordinated admissions system; the selection of candidates is entrusted to the individual judgement of scores of people with the very minimum of co-ordination. Appointments to the faculty are more concentrated, but in Cambridge (to give one quite typical example) there are about 140 separate and independent committees responsible for academic appointments. Each of these committees has its little share of power in decision-making over who is to teach, again with the very minimum of co-ordination; indeed in Cambridge with none at all. Power to assess is similarly dispersed; it is the individual examiner who sets the paper and certifies for the degree, although there are in Britain elaborate arrangements to cross-check and modify the judgement of individual examiners.

In a word, the decisions essential to a university and on which the quality of its work depends, rarely come before boards and committees at all, except as information to be noted or as recommendations to be adopted

or sent back for reconsideration. And this is not due to some shameful monopoly of power by a clique of mandarins; it is due to the principle of maximum delegation of responsibility which is central to the work and purpose of universities. Power to make the basic decisions in universities is dispersed among individual academics, just as in medicine power to diagnose and treat patients is left to individual doctors. Mr. Straw complains that no transfer of power has taken place following student participation. What he—and thousands of other students—do not realize is that it would not be a case of *transferring* control over some of the operations he mentions: it would be a case of imposing control where none has existed before.

Of course this is no argument for keeping students off boards and committees. There are still plenty of decisions for boards and committees to make, but they are—or in a healthy university they should be—supplementary to the basic decisions. This is not to say that central committees never make important decisions. Sometimes they have to. For instance, they have to allocate scarce resources of money, sites for buildings, grants for research—and such resources are always inadequate; so these decisions affect the primary decisions. A proposal to teach sociology or to do research on radio astronomy may be turned down through lack of funds. But central committees rarely initiate proposals. If they were to do so it would be contrary to the whole ethos of a university, which is that policy originates from individuals and percolates upwards to be approved; it does not descend

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from committees as directives to be obeyed. So even 'important decisions made centrally are in fact made on the recommendations of groups of people lower in the academic hierarchy. It is no surprise, therefore, that students in search of power fail to find it. Universities are ~~not~~ run by power: they are run by influence. And influence is rarely the vote (the most effective and influential faculty-student committee I presided over never once voted in the whole of its operations); influence is the convincing statement. This is a second lesson in participation which the Scholars, and for that matter some of the Masters too, need to learn. The technique for conducting university business has evolved on two sensible assumptions. The first is that the business, important though it sometimes may be, is subordinate to the main task of the university; therefore the participants do not want to waste time in philosophical or ideological dialogue: they want the agenda to contain a set of papers with all the relevant data, ending with a brief paragraph headed 'matter for decision'. The second assumption is that the participants want to get the decision made and to go back to their real interests which are teaching and research. This is a totally different attitude from the one commonly held by student representatives, who regard a senate or faculty board as a commission to review the whole philosophy and teleology of education, and who may press for a discussion of what history is *for*, before consenting to decide whether to introduce a new course in (say) African history. It is no wonder, therefore, that

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when three McGill students were asked recently what was their impression of the first senate meeting they had attended as representatives, their reply was 'We were all suppressed. . . . The agenda was what suppressed us. . . .'

It is easy to understand how students think ~~they~~ are being manipulated, hoodwinked, mystified, by the procedures of academic government. The procedures of law courts are equally puzzling to ordinary citizens. However, the students have a point. The procedures for the day-to-day running of universities are on the whole good ones and there is no need to change them. But they are not suitable or appropriate instruments for achieving major reform or for reviewing the purpose of higher education. This is a very strong reason for explaining to students, however long it takes, what the limitations of the procedures are. For student representatives have useful contributions to make to academic government, and the sooner we help them to do this the better for our universities.

I have spoken about means. Finally, I speak about ends. The student estate in Britain, whose corporate opinion can be impressed upon the public through the mass media and if necessary through collective protest, is a new social force and an important one. How will it be used?

Again I must simplify. Student groups in Britain have declared their views on issues ranging from Vietnam to teacher-training; and the students belonging to these groups range from avowed anarchists to a large inert

mass who are content to accept universities and society as they find them. So I can do no more than pick out a couple of threads from the whole fabric of the student movement. Let me try to isolate one feature which I think students expect from universities and which they will press for as they become more skilled in the arts of participation. And let me try, too, to distinguish the kind of student whose influence on academic life is—in my view—particularly valuable.

At the beginning of this lecture I quoted from the statement of student rights and responsibilities drafted for the National Union of Students in 1967. 'One of the major responsibilities of students,' the draft says, is to act 'as a conscience of society'. Let us omit from this generalization very large numbers of students who do not assume this responsibility of conscience. They come to the university to get a ticket for a job. They work well. They keep to the rules. They make no demands except to be properly taught and fairly examined. Apathy is preferable to uninformed participation. Let us omit, too, the politicized revolutionary, who believes that the university is as corrupt as the rest of society and who cynically uses any issue—visiting hours for women or research projects on defence or under-representation on senate—to provoke a confrontation and to humiliate the Establishment. His quarrel is with society. He does not want reform inside the university, for if his demands are met, he has to find a fresh provocation. There is only one answer to him and that is to declare that we shall defend the universities, whatever the cost, against his

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mischievous. Thirdly, let us omit the student who (having read, or more probably read about, Marcuse) considers that tolerance of dissent, which is the matrix from which new ideas emerge, is a form of benign repression, and competition for academic honours a thrall to the consumer society, and who therefore rejects the liberal tradition of scholarship and denies the need for examinations. I do not dismiss his case—that is an arguable matter—but I am certain that his place is not in a university. For universities cannot exist without the morality of liberalism and the morality of the work ethic. A student who does not accept these moralities is as out of place in a university as a Christian Scientist would be in a hospital. It is not simply that liberalism and the work ethic are desirable attitudes for members of the university community to have. It is that the whole process of accumulating, advancing, and transmitting knowledge as it has been conducted by Western man since the scientific revolution began would be impossible in an atmosphere of dogmatism or sloth. Academics may—and I come to this in a moment—put too exclusive a value upon liberalism and work. But universities are specialized institutions with limited functions, and to perform these functions the uncommitted mind, the objective approach, the tolerance towards dissent, and the integrity and determination required to master facts are indispensable. They constitute what Northrop Frye calls the educational contract. Without consent on these assumptions there can be no useful dialogue inside classroom or laboratory.

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When we have excluded these three categories of students there still remains a sizeable population, most of them in faculties of arts, who find themselves genuinely disillusioned by the university. Many of these students are inarticulate in their disillusion; its symptoms only appear when, having got a good degree in, say, English or history, they are overcome by what they regard as the futility of it all. One is reminded of Yeats's lines;

The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

—for it is these disillusioned and often silent students who have something to say to universities which needs a reply.

I think they have three things to say, all on a similar theme. The first is to charge the older generation with hypocrisy. Here they are on firm ground. I mentioned in my first lecture the obsolete disciplinary regulations in Cambridge which, if they were enforced, would throw the place into chaos. The convention that a student may climb into college after the gates are closed, provided he is not observed to be doing so, used to be accepted by the students gaily, as part of a style of life; now it is more likely to be regarded as just one more example of the way the older generation does not practise what it preaches. On a national scale hypocrisy is worse, though this cannot be laid at the door of the university. We talk peace: we export arms; we pity

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hunger: we skimp on overseas aid. (In defence of my generation let me add that the old have no monopoly of hypocrisy. I need to remind you only of the spurious and synthetic indignation about racial policies at the University College in Rhodesia which was the pretext for a protest at the London School of Economics; or the phoney campaign, which I saw for myself, against the Shah of Iran by students in Berlin some of whom, when I asked them, did not even know where Iran is; or the deliberate provocation of police and then, if the police react, the shrill charge of brutality.) All the same, the hypocrisies of the young do not justify the hypocrisies of the old, and we do well to erase evidence of hypocrisy from our university regulations. If students are expected to behave (as the Cambridge ordinance had it, up to a month ago) 'modestly and becomingly', the same expectations should be required from the faculty as well.

The second thing these thoughtful but perplexed students have to say is that the curriculum is irrelevant, fiddling with the pedantry of scholarship while the bombs are stockpiled for the ultimate catastrophe. This criticism needs sympathetic but frank exposure for what it generally is: a misconception of the social value of knowledge, a parochialism of the intellect (for one can be as parochial in time as in space), a preoccupation with crises and topics instead of disciplines. It is true that if the world's nuclear powers fall out, the present generation of students, born with the detritus of atomic explosions in their bones, may not survive to

rear a generation of grandchildren. But if there is one attitude of mind which will make that more likely to happen, it is loss of faith in a rational world. The rational attitude to knowledge has not saved us from making terrible mistakes, but it has not caused the mistakes, and they would have been worse in an irrational world. There is a moving passage in one of Neville Shute's novels. A lethal cloud from an atomic explosion is drifting, very slowly, across Australia, leaving only death behind. A wife with her children knows that the cloud is coming. It is springtime. She plants seeds in the garden. Even if disaster does lie ahead it is essential to cherish man's heritage of thought for the sake of those who may survive the disaster. And if we have to die prematurely in some holocaust it would be Plato's description of the death of Socrates, not 'relevant' courses in sociology, which would help us to die well. Socrates' last words were: 'Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius; will you remember to pay the debt?' Our debt to the future—a debt which is the responsibility of universities—is to transmit the heritage of rational thought. Our grandchildren may make better use of it than we have made. This is our answer to the student who thinks that some new kind of relevance in curricula may help to solve our crisis in society. We must defend the discipline of scholarship against those who want the university to supply recipes, not understanding. But—and we often fail to do this—we must persuade the disillusioned student what real relevance is. The best way to understand Soviet people, for instance, is not to read the

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works of Lenin: it is to read the tales of Gogol. St. John's gospel is a more powerful prophylactic against the consumer society than is Marcuse's *Essay on Liberation*. Socrates' question: 'Do the gods love good because it is good or is it good because they love it?' is a more penetrating probe of bourgeois morality than are modern texts on social psychology.

This brings me to the third discontent among these students we ought to listen to. It is one that brings us full circle to my first lecture, when I spoke of the responsibilities of the Masters. If you study the anatomy of student protest in Britain you find that the only way to get substantial support for a demonstration is to make it a moral issue. Thirty students may sit-in to demand student membership of the senate or better food in the cafeteria, but the number will rise to three hundred if the authorities seem to behave unjustly or repressively to any of the thirty, or if they seem to be condoning war or apartheid or if they are unresponsive to poverty. The moral issue may be a bogus one, manufactured by trouble makers, or it may be genuine; the important thing is that it must be seen as a moral issue if it is to mobilize corporate student indignation. Now this, I think, is a very reassuring feature of student protest. Not always wisely, not always with justification, some students are acting as a 'conscience of society'; and this is not out of vain presumption on their part: it is by compulsion.

So here is the problem facing the Masters. On one hand they must insist upon the educational contract.

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To abandon reason because the world is in crisis is to jettison the one technique most likely to resolve crisis. To suggest that the academic tradition has failed would be to discard all that has been achieved through rational thought since Galileo's day. If a student elects to attend a university he has, as it were, signed the educational contract. On the other hand the Masters have sometimes over-estimated the importance of rational thought compared with other ways of understanding man and the world, ways which fall outside the ambit of universities altogether; and, when I visit Africa and see the tranquillity of idleness in an African village, I wonder whether the Masters over-estimate, too, the importance of the work ethic. Preoccupation with work can lead to indifference towards one's fellow men; the scholar's detachment can smother his compassion; the habit of rigorous analysis can stifle spontaneity. This generation of students needs to be told clearly what the university's authority can do for him and what he must independently do for himself to find his identity. And it is essential that he should become reconciled to the fact that the university's contribution is limited. Its contribution is to provide an education, not an identity. 'The authority of scholarship,' wrote Denis Cowan (who, as a professor in a South African university, is in the firing line for the defence of academic freedom), 'is an intellectual and moral authority which . . . has nothing to do with mandates or the counting of votes. Democratic politics is the art of the possible, the art of compromise, concession, and expediency; but

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scholarship . . . is the art of the almost impossible, the search for truth and excellence. It has an altogether different kind of inner integrity.'

It is this inner integrity which provides a framework which can, I believe, be of some help to the Scholar in search of a moral content to his academic studies; and that would be one safeguard against disillusionment with what the university has to offer. For the university does offer a powerful weapon for changing the world. The student, subjecting himself voluntarily to this authority, learns first the orthodoxy of his subject. But—and this is the unique function of the university—he then learns the art of dissent from orthodoxy, for that is how knowledge is advanced. The art of dissent has proved itself, since the eclipse of the medieval schoolmen, to be successful if it is conducted through the mastery of verifiable facts and the use of reason. This, too, the student must accept. There can be no patience for the student who allows himself to drift into a university while rejecting the objective and rational approach in favour of spontaneity and so-called 'unstructured' learning. There is no short cut to mastery of words, techniques, ideas. If violin playing and ballet dancing demand an austere intellectual discipline, how much more so do sociology and history and biology demand it.

But intellectual detachment is not inconsistent with social concern and emotional commitment. The very techniques and conventions of scholarship carry their own repertoire of moral principles: reverence for truth,

which requires humility and courage; equality, for any scholar, however junior, who advances knowledge has his place in the guild of learning; internationalism, for whether a theory is upset by black man or white, Christian or Muslim, communist or capitalist, the theory is upset all the same; tolerance, for truth is for ever provisional and much error is only discarded truth. Moral authority for the young, therefore, does not need to come *ex cathedra* from adults: much of it can be learnt from the disciplines of scholarship, as the pragmatic conditions not only for scholarship but for all rational decision-making, in politics or commerce or private life.

For the rest, I am prepared to trust the awakened conscience of youth. It is not the function of a university to put fire in the belly; the Scholars can legitimately expect the Masters to ignite their intellects, but not their conscience. It is with this sort of concordat that I can see the greatest hope for the stability of Masters and Scholars in a university. This generation of Scholars is rejecting much that the Masters are willing to offer. Experience is regarded as something which blunts the conscience. But—and this is the paradox—students everywhere want more than knowledge and technique from the universities. They want some sort of moral compass to guide them in their self-imposed responsibilities to society and in their search for their own identity. It is as though they are repeating to us Mark Pattison's formula: 'Not a book, but a man', and adding 'but not a man like you'.

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Very well. Any good Master wants his Scholars to be better than himself. We cannot set a moral compass for them but we can encourage them to set it themselves. They will not find it easy. The best help the Masters can give is to challenge them to succeed.

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